



## Bellwether Magazine

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### Dean's Message

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## dean's message

Science has changed the way we live. It is also the basis of medical advances for all animals, humans and non-humans alike. Here at Penn Vet, we continually strive to make a real difference in animal health. We make discoveries in our basic, clinical and translational research programs that lead to new disease prevention and treatment methods. Often, these approaches lead to improvements for the humans who own animals—either because of the benefits of the human-animal bond or because better health increases a farm animal's productivity. And because the fundamental causes of disease are the same for humans and other animals, advances in one area, such as oncology, have the potential to benefit the health of many species.

We know from the completion of many genome projects that all animals share the vast majority of genes. Thus, approaches to understanding disease and treatment that are based on shared genes, such as stem cells, gene therapy and medical genetics, are also very likely to have a ripple effect, ultimately benefiting all animals.

At Penn Vet, our mission is to advance the field of veterinary medicine, and by extension, all science. We will do so by building on the strengths and expertise that we have developed in basic, clinical and translational research throughout our history. We have an added advantage in being part of the University of Pennsylvania. By partnering with other Penn schools and centers, we have an opportunity to geometrically increase scientific knowledge while decreasing the time it takes for discoveries to impact both human and animal medicine.

We see our four core areas of focus as infectious disease, neuroscience, genes and development, and comparative oncology. We chose these thematic areas for many reasons, including our renowned parasite immunology group, our successes in treating inherited blindness and neurological disease in dogs and cats, respectively, using gene therapy, our remarkable programs in clinical and basic neuroscience, and our emerging translational work in comparative oncology.

Our VMD-PhD program, new masters' degrees in translational research and public health, as well as increased student participation in lab and clinical research will help prepare a new generation of better-trained scientists for diverse career paths in a variety of areas.

“ In research that impacts humans and non-humans alike, Penn Vet is leading the way toward eminence in veterinary scientific investigation. ”

In research that impacts humans and non-humans alike, Penn Vet is leading the way toward eminence in veterinary scientific investigation. I encourage you to join us on this exciting journey, whether you are an alumnus, a client or a friend—together, we can make a difference for the future of science.

—JOAN HENDRICKS, V'79, GR'80  
THE GILBERT S. KAHN DEAN OF  
VETERINARY MEDICINE



Photo by Sabina Louise Pierce.